

MINUTES WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

May 29, 2018

At 8:00 the Wildlife Management Advisory Committee met at Borough Hall. Those attending were committee members Juetta, Chairman, Michaelis, Miller, Rubino, and Wellbrock. Also in attendance for part of the meeting was Borough Manager Tom Atkins. No other residents of Watchung or guests were present. Committee member Al Carroll has indicated that he is in the processing of retiring from this committee. The committee members appreciate his years of contribution to this committee and wish him well.

The committee agreed several meetings ago that this committee waives the format of Roberts' Rules of Order at all future meetings and will conduct itself on an informal basis.

The minutes of the prior meeting of 5/8, 2018 was unanimously approved by the other committee members.

As the first order of business, Chairman Juetta opened for discussion the Kelly deer population report, dated 5/15/18. Also presented was an analysis by the chairman, dated 5/17/18, which reconciled the most current Kelly count with the prior 2017 count. In addition the chairman related some historical issues related to prior deer population field process and counting.

In order to estimate the overall deer density in the Borough, the Kelly team performed two(2) field surveys. One survey estimated the deer population at 179 animals and the other survey estimated the population at 248 deer. A question was raised during the discussion whether or not a difference of 69 animals between surveys might have an effect on the validity of the report results. However, the committee agreed that the methodology of Kelly and the aerial survey were valid, that the per square deer population of the borough does not permit environmental regeneration and that something needs to be done to reduce the deer population to the level which permits the environment to sustain itself. Member Miller urged the committee to not only define the deer population target of environmental sustainability, but the basis as to the justification of any such figure. In the past this committee has determined that ten deer per square mile is the target figure for regeneration to be successful over and after a fifteen year period. Subsequently the deer population needs to be controlled so that it does not exceed 20 per square mile.

Because of the deer ~~population~~ survey gap issue, the chairman authorized any of the committee members who wished to understand the divergence to contact Professor Kelly directly. Furthermore, committee member Rubino suggested that the annual deer population surveys seek to be undertaken at the same time each year so as to better validate the comparative population numbers.

It also became apparent that every committee member did not receive all documents sent within the committee by committee members, particularly attachments. All agreed to be attentive to the issue and ensure that

all committee members be sent documents which were intended to reach all members of the committee.

The committee is anticipated to prepare a document which will recommend to the borough council more deer warning signs be placed on Valley Road. The matter of population reduction then was further discussed. Committee member Miller presented a document in which was presented an alternative to lethal culling. That presentation involved a successful New York State contraceptive program which was reported to be effective. To be noted is the cost factor of \$1,000 per treated animal, the requirement of land enclosure of not less than two miles of linear distances and training expenditure

The meeting was concluded at about 9:10.

Richard D. Wellbrock, Secretary